

**ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

A sound retrieval apparatus (10) comprises decoding means (12) for decoding sound data into sound signals respectively on channels, assigning means (13) for assigning the channels to the speakers (101, 102, 103, 104, 105a, and 105b) based on the channel assignment information about a specific association between the channels and the speakers, information storing means (16) for storing the channel assignment information, and control means (17) for controlling the assigning means (13) based on the channel assignment information. The sound retrieval apparatus (10) thus constructed can retrieve the sound without any laborious task such as the manual operation with the output patch board whenever any channel is reassigned.

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